(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV) : (a) No application for grant of freedom fighter's pension from Punjab is pending with the Ministry for disposal at present. However, a non-official Committee has been set up to review those cases which were rejected earlier for the inability of applicants to produce required evidence on account of their suffering being in areas now forming part of Pakistan.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Pollution Control

259. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1978 have been sufficiently efficacious in dealing with the problem of pollution ; and

(b) if not, what fresh steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI SUMATI ORAON) : (a) and (b) The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 (amended in 1978) and the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 were not found to be sufficiently efficacious in dealing with problems of pollution. As such, these Acts have been recently strengthened by the passage of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Act, 1988 and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Amendment Act, 1987 thereby giving more powers to the Pollution Control Boards to deal with the pollution problems. A comprehensive umbrella legislation *viz.* the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, has also been enacted which confers wide powers on the Central Government to protect the environment.

Chief Justices Committee on Problem of Arrears in Courts

260. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Committee of three Chief Justices constituted this year to examine the problems of arrears in courts has since met ;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what are the main recommendations made by the Committee to cut down the backlog of cases in the judicial courts?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) to (c) The Committee has met several times. It has not finalised its Report.

Meeting of Chief Electoral Officers at Tirupati

261. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Election Commission has recently organised a meeting of Chief Electoral Officers at Tirupati; and

(b) if so, what were the main recommendations made thereat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI HANS RAJ BHARDWAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Conference mainly reviewed the work in respect of revision of electoral rolls for including the voters in the age group of 18 to 21, and the other steps to be taken by way of preparation for the General Elections due this year. More important among the other items discussed at the Conference were the setting up of polling stations, scope for introduction of multi-purpose identity cards, and arrangements such as, measures to be taken for educating the voters, identification of the constituencies, etc., in regard to the pressing of electronic voting machines into service.

Central Laws to Safeguard Vulnerable sections of the Society

262. SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the number of the Central laws to safeguard the interests of the vulnerable sections of the society; and

(b) what are the details of these laws with regard to their implementation till date ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI HANS RAJ BHARDWAJ) : (a) The more important of the Central Laws to safeguard the interests of the vulnerable sections of the society are mentioned in the Statement (*See* below). In this context, 'vulnerable' has been identified in relation to the age, sex, social or economic conditions of persons. In addition to the list of laws given in the Appendix, there are certain other general laws, like criminal laws, procedural laws, etc., which also provide to safeguard the interests of women, children and other vulnerable sections of the society.

(b) The implementation of most of these laws is with the State Governments. As such it is not possible for us to give the details without obtaining information from the State Governments through the concerned Ministries of the Central Government.

Statement

Personal Law

1. The Converts' Marriage Dissolution Act, 1866 (21 of 1866).

2. The Indian Divorce Act, 1869 (4 of 1869).

3. The Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872 (15 of 1872).

4. The Married Women's Property Act, 1874 (3 of 1874).

5. The Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act, 1936 (3 of 1936).

6. The Dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act, 1939 (8 of 1939).

7. The Special Marriage Act, 1954 (43 of 1954).

8. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 (25 of 1955).

9. The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 (30 of 1956).

10. The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956 (32 of 1956).

11. The Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956 (78 of 1956).

12. The Foreign Marriage Act, 1969 (33 on 1969).

13. The Family Courts Act, 1984 (66 of 1984).

14. The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986 (25 of 1986).